

Amendments to the Claims

Please replace the Claims as shown below:

1. (original) A method for managing a streaming media service, said method comprising:

receiving a request for a streaming media service from a client, said streaming media service comprising a media service component;

selecting a service location manager to which to provide said request from a plurality of service location managers;

selecting a service provider to which to assign said media service component from a plurality of service providers of a network;

informing said service provider of said assignment to perform said media service component, causing said service provider to prepare to perform said streaming media service on streaming media;

using information to determine whether to initiate a handoff of said streaming media service from said service provider to another service provider; and

if it is determined to initiate said handoff, initiating said handoff.

Claims 2-35 (canceled)

36. (new) The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said information comprises information received from said service providers and information associated with location and priority of said service providers.

37. (new) The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said information comprises information received from any client device that is involved in said streaming media service.

38. (new) The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said information comprises information associated with network conditions.

39. (new) The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said selecting said service location manager comprises:

maintaining a record comprising identifying information for a set of service location managers among said plurality of service location managers; and
selecting said service location manager in a round robin manner from said record.

40. (new) The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said selecting said service location manager comprises a comparison of available resources of a first set of service providers supervised by a first service location manager and available resources of a second set of service providers supervised by a second service location manager.

41. (new) The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said selecting said service location manager comprises a comparison of processing loads of at least two service location managers among said plurality of service location managers.

42. (new) The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said selecting said service location manager is based on an estimate of a network communication condition between two entities connected by the network.

43. (new) The method as described in Claim 1, further comprising:
notifying a second service location manager among said plurality of service location managers of the assignment of said service provider to perform said media service component.

44. (new) The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said service provider is supervised by more than one service location manager among said plurality of service location managers.

45. (new) The method as described in Claim 44, further comprising:
maintaining a record comprising identifying information of a set of service location managers among said plurality of service location managers, each service location manager of said set of service location managers supervising said service provider; and

notifying said set of service location managers according to said record of said assignment of said service provider to perform said media service component.

46. (new) The method as described in Claim 1, further comprising:
receiving resource availability information from said plurality of service providers, wherein said information is ascertained from ongoing resource measurements; and
said selecting said service provider based on said resource availability information.

47. (new) The method as described in claim 46, wherein said resource availability information is pushed from said plurality of service providers.

48. (new) The method as described in Claim 46, wherein said receiving resource availability information occurs in response to polling of said service providers.

49. (new) The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said selecting said service provider is based on static service provider information or static network information.

50. (new) The method as described in Claim 49, wherein said static service provider information or static network information consists of at least one of the

following: information concerning computational and memory resources, connectivity and expected bandwidth and latency between servers, client and content addresses, session dispatch history, and network proximity.

51. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein said selecting comprises:
maintaining a record comprising assignments of service providers to perform media service components; and
said selecting said service provider based on said record.

52. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein said selecting comprises:
maintaining a record comprising assignments of service providers to perform media service components;
receiving resource availability information from said plurality of service providers, wherein said information is ascertained from ongoing resource measurements; and
said selecting said service provider based on said resource availability information and said record.

53. (new) The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said selecting said service provider is based on an estimate of resources associated with performing said service.

54. (new) A computer-readable medium comprising computer-executable instructions stored therein for implementing a method for managing a streaming media service, said method comprising:

receiving a request for a streaming media service from a client, said streaming media service comprising a media service component;

selecting a service location manager to which to provide said request from a plurality of service location managers;

selecting a service provider to which to assign said media service component from a plurality of service providers of a network;

informing said service provider of said assignment to perform said media service component, causing said service provider to prepare to perform said streaming media service on streaming media; and

using information to determine whether to initiate a handoff of said streaming media service from said service provider to another service provider.

55. (new) The computer-readable medium of Claim 54, wherein said information comprises information received from said plurality of service providers and information associated with location and priority of service providers.

56. (new) The computer-readable medium of Claim 54, wherein said information comprises information received from any client device that is involved in said streaming media service.

57. (new) The computer-readable medium of Claim 54, wherein said method further comprising:

notifying a second service location manager among said plurality of service location managers of the assignment of said service provider to perform said media service component.

58. (new) The computer-readable medium of Claim 57, wherein said notifying is performed by said service provider or said service location manager.

59. (new) The computer-readable medium of Claim 54, wherein said method further comprising:

receiving resource availability information from said plurality of service providers, wherein said information is ascertained from ongoing resource measurements; and

said selecting said service provider based on said resource availability information.

60. (new) The computer-readable medium of Claim 59, wherein said resource availability information is poll-based information or push-based information.

61. (new) A system for providing streaming content to a client device, said system comprising:

a plurality of service location managers, each service location manager capable of managing a handoff of a service based on information received;

a plurality of service providers, each service provider capable of performing said service on an item of streaming input content to produce said streaming content; and

a portal providing a first point of contact for said client device, said portal for receiving from said client device a request for performance of said service on said item of streaming input content, said portal for selecting a service location manager to which to provide said request from said plurality of service location managers, said service location manager for receiving said request from said portal and for selecting a service provider from said plurality of service providers and informing said service provider of said assignment to perform said service on said streaming input content to produce said streaming content, wherein said service location manager uses information to determine whether to initiate a handoff of said service from said service provider to another service provider.

62. (new) The system of Claim 61, wherein said information includes information received from said service providers.

63. (new) The system of Claim 61, wherein said information includes information received from said client device.

64. (new) The system of Claim 61, wherein said information includes information associated with network conditions.

65. (new) The system of Claim 61, wherein said portal maintains a record comprising a prioritized listing of at least one service location manager among said plurality of service location managers and selects said service location manager in order of priority according to said prioritized listing.

66. (new) The system of Claim 61, wherein said portal selects said service location manager by comparing available resources of a first set of service providers supervised by said service location manager and available resources of a second set of service providers supervised by a second service location manager.

67. (new) The system of Claim 61, wherein said portal selects said service location manager based on an estimate of a network communication condition between two entities connected by the network.

68. (new) The system of Claim 61, wherein said service provider or said service location manager notifies a second service location manager among said plurality of service location managers of said assignment of said service provider to perform said service.

69. (new) The system of Claim 61, wherein said portal activates a second service location manager of said plurality of service location managers to perform the operation of said service location manager, provided said portal determines said service location manager to be non-responsive.

70. (new) The system of Claim 61, wherein said service provider is supervised by more than one service location manager of said plurality of service location managers.

71. (new) The system of Claim 61, wherein said service provider is supervised by a first service location manager, and wherein said first service location manager transfers supervision of said service provider to a second service location manager.

72. (new) The system of Claim 61, wherein said service location manager receives resource availability information from said plurality of service providers, and wherein said selecting said service provider is based on said resource availability information.

73. (new) The system of Claim 61, wherein said service location manager maintains a record comprising assignments of service providers to perform services, and wherein said selecting said service provider is based on said record.

74. (new) The system of Claim 61, wherein said service location manager selects said service provider based on static service provider information or static network information.